

# ***Gendered Worlds 4th edition Aulette Test Bank***

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## **Chapter 2 *Bodies and Gender***

### The Standard Story

This chapter critiques the “standard story” that presents fundamentally biological explanations of sex and gender. According to this story, an infant with a female body will grow up to be a woman who is sexually attracted to men; an infant with a male body will become a man who is sexually attracted to women. The standard story assumes:

1. Biology is destiny.
2. There are only two sexes, male and female.
3. The two-sex order is universal, a fact of nature.

As this chapter shows, intersex and transgender people, and the diversity of thinking about sex historically and cross-culturally, challenge the standard story and its assumptions.

### The Interplay of Sex, Gender, and Sexuality

Even scientists have sometimes accepted the “standard story.” But the scientific community increasingly is questioning it and is now going so far as to suggest that sex may in fact be shaped by gender—that is, social and environmental factors may alter the genes, chromosomes, and hormones that are the measures we use to define sex.

### Sex, Gender and Sexuality

Based on this complex and dynamic view of sex (and sexuality), the text offers three definitions to distinguish among the related factors of sex, gender, and sexuality. All three are shaped by social experience and have generated a language for humans in terms of sex, gender, and sexuality. This language includes words such as male, female, intersex, women, men, gay, lesbian, and heterosexual. All of these terms, however, are plastic and may change in an individual’s lifetime and vary historically and from one society to another.

### Chromosomes, Hormones and Genes

Chromosomes, hormones, and genes, along with their social and environmental context, make up sex. The interplay among them creates a number of categories of human bodies, making the answer to the question “what sex are you?” more difficult to answer than you might think. While most people believe humans are either unambiguously male or female, this belief does not fit the scientific evidence on real human bodies, which are quite variable. Box 2-1 tells the story of Olympic athlete Caster Semenya, a gold medal-winning South African runner and “an androgynous tomboy” who was vilified by the Western press for not conforming to gender stereotypes.

## Sexed Bodies in Other Times and Places

Our understanding of the biology of sex—males, females, and intersex people—varies across time and place. In the ancient and medieval West, females and males were not seen as opposite sexes. Rather, females were perceived as a lesser version of males. This belief shaped the perceptions and assessments of human bodies. For example, 2,000 years ago in Rome, physicians believed that women's reproductive organs were men's "turned inside out." Ideas and beliefs about men and women in different historical periods demonstrate how beliefs about gender contribute to the ways people "see" gender differences. "Believing is seeing."

## Metaphors About Bodies in the New World

The binary view of sex (there are two opposite sexes) emerged in the early years of industrialization at the end of the 18th century. The earlier view of females as lesser forms of males still shows up in some contemporary medical literature, such as in the contrast between supposedly passive female eggs meeting active sperm in conception. We must be mindful of the hidden metaphors and biases embedded in "scientific" and "objective" discourses about bodies.

## How Many Genders are There: The Evidence from Other Cultures

The dominant ideology in U.S. culture tells us there are two sexes and two genders. The power of this ideology is an example of W.I. Thomas's theorem that if we believe things to be real, they become real in their consequences. Our expectations and beliefs about sex and gender influence our practice. We create separate restrooms, separate schools, and separate occupations, and the consequences create the gender differences we believe are real. Other cultures with other ideas about sex and gender help us to see through our own ideologies.

First Nations cultures provide examples of perceptions of gender that differ from the dominant view in Western culture. First Nations cultures more clearly separate sex and gender and make room for more than two genders. People with male, female, or intersexed bodies might be considered members of third or fourth genders.

Cultures in India also provide examples, particularly of intersex people who are a socially visible third sex and gender.

## Sexuality and Sexual Orientation: Gendering Desire

Differing perceptions based on essentialism (gender is rooted in biological sex) or social constructionism (gender is a product of social relationships) shape debates about sexuality as well as those about gender differences. How can we reconcile the physicality of sexuality, bodily responses that appear to come from deep inside ourselves, with the idea that these are social constructions? Scholars have suggested four ways:

- The basis of sexuality is not “either-or” but “both-and.”  
This point of view tries to marry biology and society.

- Sexuality is socially scripted.

This point of view uses the metaphor of scripting to explain gendered sexuality.

Bodies are produced within society.

This point of view explores ways that sexed bodies are socially produced.

- Erotic relations are historical relations.  
This point of view emphasizes the ways that our thinking, talking about, and experiencing sexuality have changed over the centuries.

### Sexuality is Racialized, Race is Sexualized

Ideologies and injustice regarding race and sexuality intersect to support systems of social inequality. Racialized and gendered sexualities—such as controlling images of some black women as sexually aggressive “jezebels” (Collins 2004), or even ideas about the supremacy of women over men—can easily become the justification for and basis of genocide. Biological arguments about differences among us are dangerous.

### Intersex and Transgender Bodies

Intersex people are born with ambiguous genitalia. Transgender refers to those who are born into bodies they feel to be inconsistent with their “core” identity. Table 2-1 shows the proportion of babies who are born intersex in the United States.

### Intersexuality and Ambiguity

There is a growing politics around intersexuality.

### Embodiment and Intersexuality

Currently four categories of intersex are recognized by the National Institutes of Health: XX intersex, XY intersex, true gonadal intersex, complex or undetermined intersex.

It is becoming less common today, but in the relatively recent past, physicians saw the birth of a sexually ambiguous infant as a “social emergency” and recommended that intersex infants be surgically reconstructed to appear as male or female. This is an example of how our ideas about sex have demanded that we reconstruct people who don’t fit those ideas. Decisions to perform these surgeries sometimes overruled established

medical ethics (requiring consent) and considerations about destroying a child's potential for sexual pleasure or reproduction.

In the West, our bodies have become cultural projects, to be transformed through diet, cosmetic surgery, workouts, transplants, and the like. The project to remake intersex children into "real" girls and boys is much the same as these other projects of transformation, with the important difference that it was almost never the choice of the intersex individuals themselves, but of doctors and parents. One observer has named the fear that intersex infants will be so psychologically at risk and so physically grotesque that they require surgery "monster ethics." In any other circumstance, such practices would be considered unethical.

Recent transformations in the medical treatment of intersex infants are the result of activism on the part of intersex adults and parents of intersex children.

### A Brief History of Intersex

In the 19th century intersex people began to be identified as part of large public surveys of soldiers and prostitutes.

1920s surgeons began reconstructing genitals of intersex infants in the United States. Part of their motivation was to ensure that children would become not only "properly sexed" as male or female but that they also become "properly sexual" as heterosexuals. In the 1950s, John Money was associated with the extreme measures parents were advised to take if they had a child whose genitals were ambiguous or damaged at birth.

### Intersex as Lived Reality

Children who were surgically reconstructed grew to adulthood in the last half of the 20th century facing many problems because of the medical and social abuse to which they were subjected. Children were treated by the medical community as freaks and were forced to have their physical bodies altered in order to fulfill the dominant cultural ideas about sex and gender held by physicians and parents.

### Intersex Activism

The late 20th century and the early 21st century have seen the emergence of social activism to bring the issue to the public's attention and to change social policy and medical treatment. Scholars and intersex people began speaking out on the maltreatment of intersex people and especially surgical reconstruction to make them appear "normal." The testimonies of such people, their demands to have an active role in their own medical care, and the growing community made possible by the Internet have given voice to intersex people and their supporters.

### The Umbrella of Transgender

By acting as if there were two and only two genders, we make a world that confirms our beliefs. However, growing numbers of people reject normative gender and sexual identities. Gender and sexual identities which challenge our binary view of gender include, among others, male-to-female (MTF) trans women, female-to-male (FTM) trans men, genderqueer and non-binary people, drag queens, butches, cross-dressers, sissies, and tomboys. As a result of these identities, some argue that gender and sex make up a continuum of possibilities, not a binary of male or female, man or woman, heterosexual or homosexual. Are people who embody these identities part of a community? Some observers say yes while others observe that each of these identities is divided by race and class.

### Intersex as a Human Rights Issue

Intersex is now recognized as a human rights issue. Not only has the movement challenged mistreatment of intersex people, it has also challenged our thinking about sex and gender.

### **Short-Answer Essay Questions**

1. What is the “standard story” regarding sex, gender, and sexuality?
2. On what assumptions is the “standard story” based?
3. How does the text define sex?
4. How does the text define sexuality?
5. How does the text define gender?
6. In ancient and medieval society, how did people understand the relationship between male and female?
7. What does it mean to say that male and female are perceived as binary?
8. What is intersexuality?
9. What is transgender?

### **Long-Answer Essay Questions**

1. Compare and contrast the four (or two or three) ways social scientists have thought about gender and desire: the basis of sexuality is not “either-or” but “both-and”; sexuality is socially scripted; bodies are produced within society; erotic relations are historical relations.

2. Go to the Internet sites <http://www.isna.org>, <http://www.accordalliance.org/>, [http://www.intersexualite.org/Response\\_to\\_Intersex\\_Initiative.html](http://www.intersexualite.org/Response_to_Intersex_Initiative.html), and <http://oiiusa.org/>, where you will find a debate on whether to use the term “intersex” or the term “disorders of sex development” (DSD) to refer to ambiguously gendered individuals. Read the various opinions on this question on the site and write about the following questions:

- What are the two sides to the argument?
- What problems might result from using the term “intersex”? From using the term “DSD”?
- Which side do you find more compelling?
- How did you make your decision? What arguments did you see in the documents on the site that convinced you which side was more correct than the other?

3. At the beginning of the chapter, you will see some definitions of three important terms: sex, gender, and sexuality. Often we collapse these terms, using them as if they were all the same or at least tied together in uniform and predictable ways for all humans. Distinguishing among the three, however, is essential. Look at the two following articles online: why and how are these distinctions important?

- Fishman, J., Wick, J., and Koenig, B. (1996). "The Use of 'Sex' and 'Gender' to Define and Characterize Meaningful Differences Between Men and Women." In *Agenda for Research on Women's Health for the 21st Century: A Report of the Task Force on the NIH Women's Health Research Agenda for the 21st Century*. Volume 2. Bethesda, MD: NIH. Pp. 15–20. Full text available free online at [http://www.i-med.ac.at/gleichstellung/files/agenda\\_book\\_2.pdf](http://www.i-med.ac.at/gleichstellung/files/agenda_book_2.pdf)
- Vlassoff, Carol, and Claudia Garcia Moreno (2002). “Placing gender at the centre of health programming: challenges and limitations.” *Social Science & Medicine* 54 (11), June. Pp. 1713–1723. <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0277953601003392>

### **Critical Thinking Exercises**

1. How do you think the Olympics Committee should handle sex/gender? Should athletes only compete with athletes of the same sex? If so, how should sex be determined? (Or if not, how should the Olympic Games be restructured?)

2. Emily Martin argues that metaphors about the biology of sex, gender, and reproduction claim to be scientific and objective while actually hiding biased attitudes. Find other ostensibly scientific descriptions of biology and gender. Do they demonstrate similar biases? Can you reword them in an unbiased manner?

3. Do you think it would be possible to “degender” society? What would this look like? Would there be any drawbacks? What would be gained?

### Multiple Choice Questions

- 1) Which of the following is *not* an assumption of the “standard story” of sex, gender, and sexuality?
  - a) Biology is destiny.
  - b) There are only two sexes, male and female.
  - c) Sex is just as much of a construct as gender.
  - d) The two-sex order is universal, a fact of nature.
  
- 2) Why is biological sex difficult to test or measure?
  - a) Chromosomally there are five variations of sexes.
  - b) Differences in embryonic development can result in a variety of different formations of genitalia.
  - c) In many cases biological makeup is far from clear, far from either simply male or female.
  - d) All of the above
  
- 3) What does historian Thomas Laqueur’s research demonstrate about the history of views of sexed bodies?
  - a) That ideas and beliefs about men and women shaped the ways people understood sexual anatomy and its function
  - b) That the understanding of female sexual anatomy has changed drastically in the past three centuries, while ideas about male sexual anatomy have changed very little
  - c) That the idea of gender was “born” in 1870 with the work of sexologist Havelock Ellis
  - d) All of the above
  
- 4) What effect did the rise of capitalism have on understandings of sex and gender?
  - a) It had very little effect: these notions have remained static through very different economic systems and political histories.
  - b) The new emphasis on labor and productivity offered women the chance to enter the workforce for the first time, which helped to create a more positive view of women.

- c) Economic institutions developed increasing interest in controlling sex and gender to increase productivity.
  - d) New divisions of labor arose that segregated men and women's work, and the idea of fundamental gender differences developed.
- 5) What is a "hijra"?
- a) A temple of the Hindu goddess Bahuchara Mata
  - b) A group of people in India who do not have male external genitalia and view themselves as "male minus maleness"
  - c) A Native American category for "not-man, not-woman"
  - d) A coming-of-age ritual in Kerala, India, in which some male-identified adolescents wear feminine costumes
- 6) What does historical and cross-cultural research demonstrate about sex and gender?
- a) That sex categories are fixed and universal, but gender can vary considerably depending on place, time, and culture
  - b) That sex and gender are not static
  - c) That a fantasy of "proper" sexuality produces a culture's notion of cultural gender and biological sex
  - d) That what we understand as biological sex is wholly culturally determined
- 7) Judith Butler identifies the heterosexual matrix as a powerful way of thinking that organizes social patterns and personal identities. What three interrelated components make up the heterosexual matrix?
- a) Chromosomes, hormones, and genitals
  - b) Sex, gender, and sexuality
  - c) Capitalism, governance, and sexuality
  - d) Desires, behavior, and identity
- 8) What does it mean to say that someone is intersex?
- a) An individual dresses as the opposite sex
  - b) An individual has a gender identity different from the sex they were assigned at birth
  - c) An individual is attracted to both men and women
  - d) An individual's sex is ambiguous

- 9) According to Halperin and Warner, what does the umbrella term “transgender” refer to?
- a) All people who reject normative gender and sexual identities and challenge sexual and gender logics
  - b) Only people who have undergone surgical gender transition
  - c) Only people who have had hormone replacement therapy
  - d) All people: the term challenges the notion that any person is born with a sex
- 10) Which of the following is the best definition of gender identity?
- a) The gender you think about yourself as being, such as a woman, a genderqueer person, or a man
  - b) How you demonstrate your gender to other people, ranging for displays of femininity, androgyny, or masculinity
  - c) Your categorization as female, intersex, or male based on your combination of chromosomes, hormones, and genital appearance
  - d) Your behaviors, fantasies, and how you categorize yourself when it comes to whom you find sexually attractive
- 11) Which of the following is the best definition of gender expression?
- a) The gender you think about yourself as being, such as a woman, a genderqueer person, or a man
  - b) How you demonstrate your gender to other people, ranging for displays of femininity, androgyny, or masculinity
  - c) Your categorization as female, intersex, or male based on your combination of chromosomes, hormones, and genital appearance
  - d) Your behaviors, fantasies, and how you categorize yourself when it comes to whom you find sexually attractive
- 12) Which of the following terms applies to a person whose gender identity aligns with the sex they were assigned at birth?
- a) Intersex
  - b) Transgender
  - c) Cisgender
  - d) Transsexual
- 13) Feminists of color have argued that the exclusion of trans women in women’s-only spaces, such as at the Michigan Womyn’s Festival, reflects racism. How so?
- a) Claims that trans women should be excluded because they do not have the same experiences as cisgender women ignore the fact that women’s experiences across racial lines are also very different.

- b) The claim that the presence of a penis might be associated with violence for some women ignores the fact that white skin might be associated with violence for some women
- c) These exclusions are typically accompanied by other explicitly racist policies.
- d) Both a. and b. are correct.

14) What does the term Two Spirit refer to?

- a) A third gender category found in some First Nations cultures
- b) A third gender category recognized in India
- c) An intersex individual
- d) All of the above

15) The “One-Sex Model” refers to:

- a) Modern feminist biological theories which posit that, biologically, there is too little difference in human bodies to justify the classification of two sexes.
- b) Modern Western notions of sex and gender which sees all human beings as having only one sex, female or male.
- c) Pre-modern notions of sexual anatomy, like the ideas of Aristotle and Galen, who saw female anatomy as the same as male anatomy, just inverted.
- d) A social critique of contemporary built environments which are built to suit the average male body.

16) Separate spheres doctrine, or the idea that social life can be divided into a public sphere of paid labor and a private sphere of home and family life, emerged as a result of:

- a) Christianity
- b) Capitalism
- c) The sexual script
- d) Evolution

17) Which of the following is the best definition for Gagnon and Simon’s *sexual script*?

- a) a society’s rules for when and where it is acceptable to have sex, with whom, and how individuals should initiate and have sex
- b) a society’s rules for who, according to sex and gender, should engage in paid labor in the public sphere or engage in unpaid housework and childcare in the private sphere
- c) stereotypes about how women and men communicate

- d) universal trends in how human beings initiate and engage in sex as influenced by our innate sexual drives
- 18) Which of the following is the best example of an *essentialist* view of sex and gender?
- a) Women tend to take up less physical space than men because society socializes them to move out of the way for others and cross their legs when seated.
  - b) Boys tend to be rowdier than girls because their parents, teachers, and coaches encourage rough play.
  - c) Men are more interested in sex because they have an evolutionary drive to procreate with as many women as possible.
  - d) Children who are raised by single mothers harbor fewer gender stereotypes because they see their mothers handling work and home responsibilities.
- 19) \_\_\_\_\_ is an umbrella term used to refer to all persons who reject normative gender and sexual identities and challenge existing logics embedded in social institutions.
- a) Transgender
  - b) Intersex
  - c) Transsexual
  - d) Feminist
- 20) Fausto-Sterling observes that chromosomal combinations other than XX and XY are common and posits that there are \_\_\_\_\_ sexes.
- a) Zero
  - b) Nine
  - c) Two
  - d) Five
- 21) Which of the following is the best example of a *social constructionist* view of gender roles in sexuality?
- a) Gender is rooted in biological sex.
  - b) Gendered sexual arrangements, such as male dominance and female passivity, are rooted in evolutionary adaptations.
  - c) Sexual power arrangements are human created and should not be conflated with evolutionary adaptation.
  - d) Both a. and b. are correct.

- 22) Which of the following claims supports the idea that bodies are *socially produced*?
- a) Human beings alter their bodies to align with gender expectations, such as through surgery, dieting, and drugs like steroids.
  - b) Human beings learn and internalize gestures and postures that reflect gendered and sexualized body practices.
  - c) Sexual arousal and turnoffs are physical responses that are mediated by social relationships and cultural conditioning.
  - d) All of the above.
- 23) Who are Maria Martínez-Patiño and Caster Semenya?
- a) Olympic athletes whose participation was challenged as the result of the “sex test”
  - b) Activists who fought to reform the trend of surgically altering intersex babies
  - c) Authors of the The International Bill of Gender Rights
  - d) Late 19<sup>th</sup> century biologists who popularized the idea that sexuality constitutes a stable, lifelong identity rather than categories of acceptable and unacceptable acts
- 24) Congenital adrenal hyperplasia (CAH) and Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome (AIS) are both examples of \_\_\_\_\_.
- a) Transgender identities
  - b) Intersex conditions
  - c) Homosexuality
  - d) Testosterone-related aggression
- 25) Which of the following is NOT a right designated by the International Bill of Gender Rights?
- a) The right of parents to consent to surgery to correct ambiguous sexual development on behalf of their infants
  - b) Access to space and participation in activities regardless of self-defined gender identity
  - c) The right to define one’s own gender identity
  - d) Freedom from psychiatric diagnosis and treatment solely on the basis of self-defined gender identity

**Answers:** 1) c 2) d 3) a 4) d 5) b 6) b 7) d 8) d 9) a 10) a 11) b 12) c 13) d 14) a 15) c 16) b 17) a 18) c 19) a 20) d 21) c 22) d 23) a 24) b 25) a

### **Films and Videos**

*Juggling Gender* (1992), *Still Juggling Gender* (2007). Remarkable videos about Jennifer Miller, a performance artist who just happens to have a beard. Rotating masculinity and femininity the way some change shoes, Miller confronts gender every time she hits the streets.

*Paris is Burning*. Gay and trans African Americans and Latinos in 1980s New York City explore and deconstruct performed identities of inequality and gender through the house system and the balls they participate in. See also "Paris is Burning: How Society's Stratification Systems Make Drag Queens of Us All."

*Screaming Queens: The Riot at Compton's Cafeteria* (<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0464189/>): Documentary about transgenders and transvestites fighting police harassment at Compton's Cafeteria in San Francisco's Tenderloin in 1966, three years before the famous riot at Stonewall Inn bar in NYC.

*You Don't Know Dick: Courageous Hearts of Transsexual Men* (1996): Lyle, Max, Stephe, Ted, and James: a photographer who lifts weights, a cop, a mechanic, writers, an artist; one is gay, at least three are in serious relationships with women, one was in the seminary, one has three children from a previous marriage. All six were born female and all are female-to-male transsexuals. They talk about childhood, deciding to make the change, telling parents and friends and coworkers, testosterone therapy, surgeries, organs, embracing their histories and how their lives are now. Friends, a parent, lovers, and two children also talk.

*Toilet Training* (<http://www.srlp.org/films/toilettraining>): A documentary video and collaboration between transgender videomaker Tara Mateik and the Sylvia Rivera Law Project, an organization dedicated to ending poverty and gender identity discrimination. The video addresses the persistent discrimination, harassment, and violence that people who transgress gender norms face in gender-segregated bathrooms. Using the stories of people who have been harassed, arrested, or beaten for trying to use bathrooms, *Toilet Training* focuses on bathroom access in public space, in schools, and at work.

*She's a Boy I Once Knew* (<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt1095496/synopsis>): Using interviews, animation, old family footage, and voice mail, Vancouver filmmaker Gwen Haworth documents her male-to-female gender transition partially through the voices of her anxious but loving family, best friend, and wife. Calling for a new era of DIY transgender self-representation, Haworth's feature debut is a comic, heartbreaking, and uplifting autobiography that breaks away from the marginalized depictions of transsexuals that populate mainstream media and focuses on the interpersonal relationships of a family who unexpectedly find their bonds strengthening as they overcome their preconceptions of gender and sexuality.

*Gender Redesigner* (2007; <http://www.logotv.com/video/gender-redesigner/1632887/playlist.jhtml>): A provocative, honest, and engaging exploration of the FTM transitioning process. A documentary about gay life in America quickly

transforms into another type of journey as the subject in the film, fAe, begins efforts to transition to a male. Facing a series of challenges (financial, familial, and cultural/geographic), fAe's personal strength and supportive network serve as clear resources in the transitioning process. Explores complex links between biological sex, gender construction, sexual orientation/identity, and gender passing or blurring.

*Transgender Revolution:* This episode of *Investigative Reports* follows three transsexuals through the daily routine of their lives and talks to them about their individual experiences. First, a female-to-male sheriff talks about what he had to overcome with his fellow coworkers. Then, a male-to-female electrical designer talks about her experiences in hosting a radio program called *Gendertalk*. Finally, a male-to-female discusses the process of the actual sex change operation, as *Investigative Reports* follows her through the transformation. This episode also looks at the crimes targeted at transsexuals and how the group is trying to become part of the Congressional Hate Crimes Act.

*Adventures in The Gender Trade:* Kate Bornstein, writer and performer, was born a man. This documentary presents her frank account of her personal journey from unhappy boy child into liberated transsexual lesbian. Intercut with her satiric night club act called "Hidden: A Gender" are the stories of a wide range of people who refused to have their identity defined by whether they were born male or female. We are thus presented with a spectrum of colorful gender anomalies: drag queens, transsexuals, cross-dressers, gays and lesbians . . . and those who refuse to be categorized. They want the right to be not "male" or "female," but whatever they choose in between. Why, they ask, must we have a bipolar gender system, when some other cultures can accommodate diversity?

*Ma Vie en Rose ("My Life In Pink")* is the story of Ludovic, a little girl born in a little boy's body. For him, nothing is more natural than to change his gender. As a hopeful and sensitive child, he truly believes that a miracle is going to happen. He will be a girl, no doubt about it, and he's in love with Jerome, his schoolmate and son of his father's colleague. Initially a source of amusement, an outrage begins in their suburb when the two boys are discovered pretending to get married. The family begins to realize with horror that his desire to be a girl isn't just a little boy's fantasy. They try to make him change his mind, to no avail. The situation turns into a real-life drama of intense reactions from neighbors, friends, and teachers, resulting in a profoundly optimistic ending.

*Queer Streets* (<http://www.queerstreets.com/>) is a short documentary that takes a hip, gritty look at the reality of life on the street for kids with three strikes against them. Queer youth make up approximately 20 to 50 percent of the 20,000 homeless young people in New York City. Homophobia, poverty, and mental illness put them on the streets, where they struggle with violence, drugs, sex work, and daily life in the youth shelter system. See the issues through their eyes, in their own words.

